

REMARKS

I. Introduction

With cancellation of claims 19, 24, and 27 and addition of claims 37 to 42, claims 20 to 23, 25, 26, and 28 to 42 are now pending, since claims 1 to 18 were previously canceled. It is respectfully submitted that all of the presently pending claims are allowable, and reconsideration of the present application is respectfully requested.

Applicants note with appreciation the acknowledgement of the claim to foreign priority and the indication that all certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

Applicants thank the Examiner for considering the previously filed Information Disclosure Statement, PTO-1449 paper, and cited references.

II. Rejections of Claims 19 to 24, 27 and 30 to 36

While Applicants do not agree with the merits of the present rejections, to facilitate matters, claims 19, 24, and 27 have been canceled herein without prejudice, claims 20 and 21 have been amended herein without prejudice so that claims 20 to 23 and 30 to 34 depend from claim 25, and claim 35 has been amended herein without prejudice so that claims 35 and 36 depend from claim 26, thereby rendering moot the present rejection.

III. Double Patenting

Claims 19 to 36 were provisionally rejected as unpatentable over co-pending Application No. 10/547,401. Such a rejection does not require filing of a Terminal Disclaimer or other response unless the claims of the cited application actually issues, and the double patenting rejection remains as the sole remaining rejection in this application. Applicant therefore will respond further to this rejection when the rejection is no longer provisional.

IV. Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants thank the Examiner for the indication that claims 25, 26, 28, and 29¹ include allowable subject matter. In this regard, the Examiner will note that each of claims 25, 26, 28, and 29 has been rewritten herein in independent form to include all of the features of its respective base claim and any intervening claims. It is therefore respectfully submitted that claims 25, 26, 28, and 29 are in condition for immediate allowance.

V. New Claims 37 to 42

Claims 37 to 42 have been added herein. It is respectfully submitted that new claims 37 to 42 do not add any new matter and are fully supported by the present application, including the Specification. Claims 37 and 40 depend from claim 26, claims 38 and 41 depend from claim 28, and claims 39 and 42 depend from claim 29, so that these dependent claims are allowable for at least the same reason as claims 26, 28, and 29, respectively.

VI. Subject Matter of Claims as Previously Presented

Applicants reserve the right to pursue the subject matter of the claims as previously presented in a continuation patent application. Further, any disclaimer that may have occurred during the prosecution of this application is expressly rescinded as regards any subsequently filed patent application.

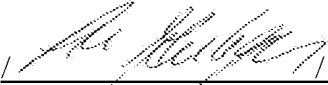
¹ The Office Action states that claims 25 to 29 include allowable subject matter, but also includes claim 27 as one of the claims rejected based on 35 U.S.C. § 102. Clarification of the status of canceled claim 27 as previously presented is therefore respectfully requested.

VII. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that all of the presently pending claims are allowable. Prompt reconsideration and allowance of the present application are therefore respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,
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